

PART A

Report to: Audit Committee
Date of Meeting 30 June 2015
Report of: Head of Democracy and Governance
Title: Requests made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000

1. **SUMMARY**

This is a half year report of requests made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

From 1 October 2014 until 31 March 2015 the Council received 227 requests all but 27 of which were replied to in the required time. A list of the requests is attached at appendix 1

2. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

To note the contents of this report.

Contact Officer:

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Report approved by Managing Director

3.0 **DETAILED PROPOSAL**

- 3.1 The Freedom of Information Act 2000 came fully into force on 1st January 2005.
As a public authority we are obliged to answer written requests for information under the Act within 20 working days
- 3.2 This report covers the periods 1 October 2014 until 31 March 2015.
- 3.3 In this period the Council recorded receiving 227 requests for information under the Act all but 27 were replied to within the statutory 20 working days.
- 3.4 The requests have been varied. Appendix 1 gives a brief summary of each request.

- 3.5 A comparison with the same period last year shows a slight reduction in the number of requests down from 269 but a significant improvement in the number of responses replied to in time. The percentage of replies out of time is down from 24.5% to 11.9%. This has primarily been due to Revenues and Benefits working to improve their response times.
- 3.6 The Customer Service Centre Team Leaders continue to emphasise to departments the need to respond to requests within the statutory time frame.
- 3.7 The Mayor and Managing Director continue to receive a weekly list of all new FOI requests that are received.
- 3.8 Unfortunately the recording and monitoring processes for FOI requests in Lagan are still not fixed. The Customer Service Centre Team Leader continues to press Capita for a resolution.

4.0 **IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 Financial

The Shared Director of Finance comments that this report indicates that information is found using existing staff resources. If, in the future, the requests increase in number and/or complexity then it may become necessary to review this situation.

4.2 Legal Issues (Monitoring Officer)

The Head of Democracy and Governance comments that ongoing training continues to be provided across the council to ensure officers are aware of the Council's responsibilities under the Act

4.3 Staffing

Requests are currently being managed within existing resources

4.4 Accommodation

No implications

4.5 Equalities

No implications

4.6 Community Safety

No implications

4.7 Sustainability

No implications

Potential Risks

Potential Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Overall score
Request not replied to within statutory time limit	2	2	4
Those risks scoring 9 or above are considered significant and will need specific attention in project management. They will also be added to the service's Risk Register.			

Appendix 1

Summary of FOI requests October 2014 to March 2015

Background papers:

None